

To: People Interested in the Plymouth Generating Facility

We would like to hear from you about Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Benton County's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Plymouth Generating Facility. If you requested a copy of the Draft EIS, it is enclosed for your review. Comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15, 2002.

The Draft EIS describes the proposed project, tells why it may be needed, discusses the environmental and social impacts the project could create, and lists the mitigation measures that would lessen or eliminate those impacts. We want your comments on the Draft EIS. Did we analyze all the resources important to you? Are there other ways to lessen impacts? We greatly appreciate your time in reviewing the document and giving us your comments.

How to Comment:

If you have comments on the Plymouth Generating Facility Draft EIS, you can give them to us at the public meeting; write a letter to Benton County Planning Department, P.O. Box 910, Prosser, WA 99350 or Communications, Bonneville Power Administration - KC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, OR, 97212; e-mail us at comment@bpa.gov; or call toll free at 1-800-622-4519 and record your comments.

Public Meeting:

**Thursday, September 26, 2002
Benton County Fire Protection District No. 6 Fire Station
Corner of Third Ave. and Nunn St. in Plymouth**

The meeting will be an informal open house. Come anytime when it is convenient for you between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Members of the project team will be available to describe the proposed project and the environmental studies performed, and answer your questions.

Proposal:

Plymouth Energy, L.L.C. proposes to construct and operate a 307-megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired, combined cycle power generation facility on a 44.5-acre site 2 miles west of the community of Plymouth in southern Benton County, Washington. The project, to be known as the Plymouth Generating Facility (PGF), would require a new transmission interconnection to deliver the power generated at the PGF to BPA's transmission grid. Transmission alternatives being considered include (1) a new 0.6-mile-long transmission line interconnecting the PGF with either BPA's proposed McNary-John Day 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line or the existing BPA McNary-Big Eddy 230-kV transmission line; or (2) rebuilding the existing Benton Public Utility (PUD) 115-kV line located along Christy Road, extending it to the Columbia River crossing, and interconnecting to the BPA's McNary Substation.

Environmental Analysis:

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires that significant environmental impacts of a proposed federal action are discussed in an EIS. According to NEPA, BPA, as a federal agency, must study the environmental impacts of the proposed project before it can take action. As the permitting agency, Benton County is required to follow the Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Benton County is a cooperating agency with BPA, and the EIS will provide the analyses needed for both NEPA and SEPA.

Process/Schedule:

We will read and consider all the comments submitted during the comment period, which ends at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15, 2002. We expect to publish a Final EIS in the fall of 2002 (if you received the Draft EIS, you will also receive a Final EIS unless you tell us you do not want a copy). All comments and our responses to those comments will be published in the Final EIS. Also, where appropriate, the Final EIS will be updated with any changes to the proposal or analysis in response to comments. When we have completed the Final EIS, Benton County will process the Conditional Use Permit Application and BPA will issue a Record of Decision outlining whether and how we will proceed with the project.


For More Information:

Copies of the Draft EIS or Summary are available by contacting Benton County Planning at (509) 786-5612 or BPA at 1-800-622-4520. The document is also posted on BPA's website at www.efw.bpa.gov – click on Environmental Planning/Analysis, then on Active Projects. If you have any questions about the proposal or the Draft EIS, please call Michael Shuttleworth at (509) 786-5612 or Philip Smith toll-free at 1-800-282-3713 or send an e-mail Michael Shuttleworth at mike.shuttleworth@co.benton.wa.us or Philip Smith at pwsmith@bpa.gov. Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,



Terry A. Marden, Director
Benton County Planning
and Building Department



for Philip W. Smith
Environmental Project Manager
Bonneville Power Administration